TL902-10

SECOND RIGHT OF REPLY

BY THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION

ON ITEM 9

5.2.90

Madam Chairperson,

It is with great reluctance that my Delegation is asking for the floor for the second time and getting bogged-down in irrelevant quarrels initiated by the Portuguese delegation in its previous interventions on item 9.

Indeed, if one wants to present a complete picture on the decolonisation process of East Timor, one should not pinpoint certain segments but look at the overall context, the historical past, the present as well as future developments.

After more than 400 years of Portuguese colonisation of East Timor there was no gradual decolonisation process nor the slightest attempt to leave behind a solid infrastructure of government and administration. And when Portugal relinquished its responsibility in 1975 it left only meagre, if any, facilities for the population. On top of this misery was the civil war of its own creation, which claimed the lives of thousands of people.

What Portugal did to safeguard the decolonisation process and protect human lives was nothing more than abandoning the territory. By this actually Portugal has forfeited any moral and legal rights with regard to East Timor. Why then does Portugal now pretend to be the champion of self-determination to a territory which it claims to have no interest? It would be hard to understand the genuine intent on the part of Portugal in this regard, particularly in its reference to Resolution 1514 (XV), where its ambivalent

position is well recorded.

If Portugal now claims the authority of the UN, the historical facts show that Portugal had made much of the non-involvement of the UN in the process of decolonisation for the people of East Timor. Indonesia, on the contrary, far from jeopardising the UN system was from the beginning in favour of UN involvement in the process of decolonisation of East Timor. As a matter of record, in 1976 the provisional Government of that territory - which submitted a petition for integration to the Indonesian Government in the same year - informed the UN of the developments and made every effort to have it participate in the decolonisation process. It should be stressed here however, that while the participation of the UN with regard to the integration process is laudable, it is not mandatory as it is clearly stated in principle IX (5) of resolution 1541 (XV), which I quote: "The United Nations would, when it deems necessary, supervise these processes."

What Indonesia has done has not only contributed to the completion of the process of decolonisation but also to promote the enjoyment of human rights in their totality for the people of East Timor. The achievements of the province of East Timor in all aspects of development in the last 14 years are clear evidence of the enjoyment of those rights. Suffice for my delegation to refer to the reports of the various visits made by foreign dignitaries, visitors and journalists to the province. Such evaluation is succinctly reflected in London's Daily Telegraph of 17 March 1989 and the Northern Territory News of Australia on 14 December 1989: "Indonesia has done more for the Timorese since 1976 than Portugal did in four centuries". Indeed, the improvement of the quality of life of the people of East Timor against the backwardness which resulted from four centuries of colonialisation is the primary interest of the population.

The end?